PFLAG
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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Keeping Families Strong

September, 2005

Lavender Film Festival at FAC Sept. 16-18

The 6th annual Lavender Film Festival will be held at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center September 16-18. The hard work of festival director Alma Cremonesi and her volunteers will again bring fine LGBT films to our community.

Attend if you can; if you can't, consider making a donation to support the festival.

Colorado Springs PFLAG is sponsoring "Loggerheads", to be shown on Saturday afternoon at the festival.

A letter from Alma to PFLAG is enclosed with this newsletter.

SEPTEMBER PFLAG CHAPTER MEETING

Tuesday
September 20, 2005

7:00 P.M.

Short Film
Small group discussion to follow

The Dwelling Place
508 North Tejon Street
Everyone is welcome

A Message from PFLAG's Executive Director, Jody Huckaby - August 27th

This week began with some incredible news for California. The California State Supreme Court issued landmark opinions in three cases involving the legal status of children born to same- sex parents. In all three cases, the Court held that when a couple deliberately brings a child into the world through the use of assisted reproduction, both partners are legal parents, regardless of their gender or marital status. California is the first state whose Supreme Court has made such a determination, and its holding in these three cases will certainly impact future rulings in other states.

In simple terms, what the California State Supreme Court did is declare that children born to same-

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Jean Hodges Answers Trinidad Critics

Jean Hodges, President of the Colorado Coalition of PFLAG Chapters, wrote this eloquent Letter to the Editor:

The recent article in *the Pueblo Chieftan* by Mike Garrett about the controversy concerning sex-change surgeries in Trinidad deserves a public response.

Mr. Garrett makes an important point that sex-change surgeries are worth an estimated $1 million annually to the Trinidad hospital. The negative impact on revenue loss to a rural hospital is significant to the whole community. That is a fact.

However, this argument does not address the underlying ignorance about transgendered people that the petition being circulated by some Trinidad clergy represents. Fear of Trinidad gaining a reputation as a sex-change capital seems to be driving this opposition. This narrow perspective ignores the humanity of those people who seek such radical surgery.

The opposing petition refers to sex reassignment surgery as "mutilation of the body", as if it were comparable to body piercing and tattoos, only worse. If these clergy and those who agree with them would look more deeply into why some people choose this radical surgery, they might be able to practice compassion more appropriate to Christian ministry.

Transgendered people are those whose gender identity or gender expression (how they communicate their gender through dress and appearance) differ from conventional expectations for their physical sex. Although transgendered people have been part of every culture and

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This newsletter is published by the Colorado Springs Chapter of PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).

PFLAG Mission Statement:
PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (GLBT) persons, their families and friends through:
√ **support**, to cope with an adverse society,
√ **education**, to enlighten an ill-informed public, and
√ **advocacy**, to end discrimination and secure equal civil rights.

PFLAG provides an opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

Time to Renew Your PFLAG Membership!

Your membership is more important to our PFLAG chapter than ever. We are being asked to help support the efforts of our national organization by sending $15.00 per member as *chapter dues*. As a result, we have modified our membership levels this year.

With your continued support, we will be able to strengthen not only our local activities but also the many wonderful projects undertaken by National PFLAG. Be sure that you take a look at the excellent National website— www.pflag.org

Always Remember
To keep our PFLAG meetings and conversations
CONFIDENTIAL

Message From PFLAG's Executive Director (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)
sex couples must be treated like all other children. These children must have a legally protected relationship to both parents. The court made it clear that all children should have the same legal protections with respect to their parents, even if the children have two Moms or two Dads.

...This is a timely example of just how critical our state supreme courts can be in protecting the rights of all people. Of even greater significance is the vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court and the nomination of John Roberts to take the place of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. PFLAG National joined the Human Rights Campaign, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Center for Lesbian Rights today in opposing Roberts's nomination, and I want you to understand why we have taken this position in advance of the upcoming senate confirmation hearings.

We did not come to this decision lightly… we think there is ample evidence from the documents that have been released that Roberts would not uphold and protect the rights of our GLBT loved ones. His writings reflect an alarmingly dismissive interpretation of an individual's right to privacy, causing us to question how he would have ruled in Lawrence v. Texas. And when he served as an attorney for President Reagan, his writings indicate a very narrow interpretation of the Equal Protection Clause, leading us to be doubt the outcome of Romer v. Evans had he been on the Court. We cannot afford to take the chance that Roberts would spend the next 30 years on the highest court of the land working against the rights and protections of our GLBT loved ones.

As parents, family members, friends and allies of our GLBT loved ones, we must call on our senators and insist that they realize the potential impact on our lives and those of our loved ones if the Supreme Court unravels the important cases that have secured the few protections that exist for GLBT Americans.

— Jody Huckaby
PFLAG Executive Director

Pikes Peak Fund for Tolerance and Equality Reception - Sept 24

Mary Lou Makepeace and Bill Mead of the Pikes Peak Fund for Tolerance and Equality invite you to a community gathering and reception on Saturday, September 24 5:30 -7:30 p.m. at the Gay and Lesbian Fund for Colorado, 315 East Costilla, Colorado Springs.

The Pikes Peak Fund for Tolerance and Equality seeks to improve the social climate of the greater Colorado Springs area. This reception will feature speakers who will share ideas on how to address current social issues, and acquaint you with efforts and opportunities to improve them. In addition, the gathering will offer you the opportunity to express your concerns and thoughts how to continue make our community more socially vibrant and flexible.

Hors d'oeuvres and wine by Gertrude's. Please join us and bring your friends and family to share in this opportunity to participate in positive social change. RSVP by Monday, September 19, 2005 to The Gay & Lesbian Fund 473-4455 or chrisr@gayandlesbianfund.org

A Letter to PFLAG

August, 2005

Whoever thought of starting PFLAG provided a marvelous support for gays and lesbians. Six years ago when we first began the Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival, despite my very limited experience with PFLAG, I knew if we went to PFLAG we would receive a warm welcome. I had no idea of the extent of enthusiasm and support PFLAG members would give the film festival, which continues to this day. As a lesbian living in the non-accepting environment of Colorado Springs, while keeping an LGBT film festival alive, it is especially gratifying to have a Colorado Springs chapter that cares and is excited about the festival.

When we first started the Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival, our purpose was to provide entertainment, education and validation for LGBT people. During the six-year life of the festival, we have seen the festival's purpose expand, to become an all-inclusive community event that offers a presence against the forces of bigotry and thus gives some balance to Colorado Springs. Many of the people who help to produce the festival are here because we come from old Colorado Springs families. We have roots and family ties. With PFLAG members we want to help to make Colorado Springs a more palatable place for LGBT people.

As full acceptance for LGBT people increases throughout the world, the genre of gay and lesbian films matures. The films are better and better, more inclusive and potentially of interest to everyone regardless of sexuality. This year we decided to open with a Canadian short and Spanish feature as we learned almost simultaneously that Canada and Spain legalized gay and lesbian marriage.

Our Opening Night reception has become a big party that brings the community together in lively celebration of LGBT people. The feature film that follows, *Unconscious (Inconscientes)*, is whimsical farce that takes place in Barcelona in 1913 replete with costumes of the period. Like many of the films of the festival, this year, we see complex characters and in this film floundering in the nascent age of psychoanalysis. Partially romance and mystery, always amusing, we may be surprised by the sophistication of the characters almost 100 years ago and will certainly gain insight into Spanish humor and culture.

Films have gone from exploring exclusive primary relationships to presenting whole people whose lives and relationships—like in real life-- involve a myriad of ties and characters. This is especially true in *Loggerheads* directed by Tim Kirkman with an all-star cast of Kip Pardue, Michael Learned, Tess Harper and Bonnie Hunt. An adoptive son loses his family to the rigidity of their religion while his birth mother searches for him. The film goes beyond the main character's love relationship to show his family ties and his love of loggerheads (turtles) to create a satisfying complex story and film.

Four years ago, directors Ducastel and Martineau brought to our festival a film about the exploits of a gay man in *The Adventures of Felix*. This year in their film, *Cote d'Azur*, we have a less serious, downright hilarious film about a whole family on vacation on the Riviera. which presents a broader range of characters and sexualities. *Cote d'Azur* opened the prestigious San Francisco and Los Angeles LGBT film festivals, and promises to be a hit at PPLFF this year as its closing film.

As acceptance of LGBT people grows, our films mature and we are represented as whole people, our local film festival is growing and maturing, too. We still need a larger audience and the support of the community. The Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival presents 9 short films, 8 features and two documentaries this year To learn more about the entire festival, go to www.pplff.org or, call us at 719-38-MOVIE and we'll send you our brochure .See you on September 16th for the opening of the Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival at the Fine Arts Center!

- Alma Cremonesi
Director

S-CAP News: Chaffee County AIDS Walk - Sept 10

The Chaffee County AIDS Walk is Saturday, September 10th and we're looking for someone to share his/her HIV story with the walkers.

For more than a decade, the Chaffee County AIDS Walk in Salida has been raising funds and AIDS awareness. This year, the walk will be kicked off with a short program that will include a brief personal story.

Are you interested in standing by our side at the event? If so, please contact Bob Rebello (mailto: brebello@s-cap.org) at 719-578-9092, ex. 115. For more information about the event, visit S-CAP's website at http://www.s-cap.org.

[Bob Rebello spoke at a PFLAG meeting earlier this year about his work with S-CAP (Southern Colorado Aids Project) supporting HIV-positive and AIDS victims in southern Colorado.]

Inside/Out Youth Services

Inside/Out's 3rd Annual mountain bike Fall Fat Tire and Foliage Fundraiser is coming up on Saturday, September 24, 2005. The route is approximately 35 miles in and around Colorado Springs.

To register for the Ride call (719) 328-1056. Don't miss this opportunity to have fun, enjoy friendship, and support a great non-profit organization. Individual Rider registration is $35.00 and teams of 4 can register for $135.00.

Inside/Out Youth Services is the only organization that educates, advocates for, and supports Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Questioning (LGBITQ) youth ages 13-22 in Colorado Springs. For more information about Inside/Out, please visit our website at http://www.insideoutys.org or call us at (719) 328-1056. See you on the 24th of September!

Remember that you can support Inside/Out by purchasing King Soopers gift certificates at PFLAG meetings.

Citizens Project to Honor the Rev. James White

Citizens Project will present the second annual Divine Award to Rev. James White at a reception which is free and open to the public on Sept. 22 from 5:30—7:30 at the Warehouse Gallery, 25 West Cimarron Street. Reservations should be made by calling Citizens Project at 520-9899 by September 15th.

The Divine Award is given annually to a person in the region who has worked tirelessly to create a vibrant democracy in which equal rights are protected and differences are respected.

PPGLCC Coming Out Group - September 12 & 26

The Coming Out discussion group looks at the struggles of dealing with one's sexual orientation. It is a non judgmental, confidential group in which gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered men and women at all stages of the coming out process can openly talk about those issues that are of personal concern. Areas of discussion include: coming out and religion, coming out to family and friends, coming out at work, HIV/AIDS and homophobia.

The group meets the second and fourth Mondays of each month from 7-9PM at the Pride Center, 716 1/2 N. Tejon, directly behind 716 N. Tejon. For more information: Contact Barry at comingout@ppglcc.org or call the Pride Center at (719) 471-4429.

PPGLCC Sets Annual Meeting—October 1

The Pikes Peak Gay and Lesbian Community Center (PPGLCC) invites the LGBT community and its Allies to attend the Annual Meeting and Board Elections on October 1, 2005, at 7:00 pm at the Gay and Lesbian Fund, 315 E. Costilla in Colorado Springs.

During this year's meeting, we will present the 2004 Annual Report and 2005 Financials to-date, and provide a snapshot of the achievements and challenges that have influenced staff, programs, activities, and advocacy over the past year. If you are a current PPGLCC member, you will also be asked to select our 2006 Board of Directors.

We sincerely hope you'll join us on October 1st for a bit of business and a little light repast. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to call. Linda Devocelle and the PPGLCC Board of Directors. Email: linda@ppglcc.org or call the Pride Center: (719) 471-4429

Please RSVP no later than Wednesday, September 28

[This is a great way to learn more about PPGLCC. Linda Devocelle spoke at a recent PFLAG meeting.]

BULLETIN BOARD

Sept 7—Dr. Marci Bowers, surgeon and nationally renowned gender identity expert, will speak at a public forum sponsored by Southern Colorado Equality Alliance and CSU—Pueblo. Hasan School of Business Auditorium, CSU-Pueblo, 7:00 p.m. For information call (719) 564-4004 (SCEA in Pueblo)

Sept 16-18—Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival (see article)

Sept 22—Citizens Project Divine Award Reception (see article)

Sept 24—Inside/Out Fall Fat Tire Ride (see article)

Sept 24— Pikes Peak Fund for Tolerance and Equality—Reception (see article)

Oct 1—PPCLGG Annual Meeting (see article)

Oct 15 — Gay and Gray in the West Conference (see article)

Jean Hodges Answers Trinidad Critics (cont.)

society in recorded human history, they have only recently become the focus of medical science. Many medical researchers now believe that transgenderism is rooted in complex biological factors that are fixed at birth, and thus it is not a choice but a personal dilemma.

Being born as a transgendered person begins, in early childhood confusion and grows into mental anguish caused by not being true to your real self in how you live in the world. To decide to have sex reassignment surgery often means giving up family relationships or careers because of the trouble it causes others who cannot adjust to a different persona.

Many transgendered persons choose not to have surgery because of the enormous expense and the sacrifices demanded. But those who do decide on the necessary multiple operations do so to bring their body and soul together — to make congruent their physical body with what their spirit tells them about who they are. It is a difficult journey unknown to those of us who take our bodies and gender for granted. We cannot judge the cost of this journey to those whose spiritual well-being demands it.

Self-identification is surely a fundamental right in our democratic society. It is part of our basic freedom of expression. It harms no one. What those who oppose it call mutilation is part of a healing process to a transsexual. To a trans person it is part of the "pursuit of happiness" guaranteed by our Bill of Rights. It is a birthright of authentic living.

Yes, economic concerns are important in a community, but far deeper is the respect of every person's right to be who they are. Let the clergy in Trinidad value the human spirit of all God's children, no matter how they choose to identify themselves. - Jean Hodges

Boulder PFLAG

Gay and Gray in the West Conference in Denver

The third Gay and Gray in the West Conference is designed to provide GLBT older adults, their caregivers, and those concerned about aging issues in the GLBT community with the information needed to plan for a healthier and more fulfilling future. PFLAG Denver is one of the sponsors of the event. The conference will be held on October 15, 2005, at the Denver Merchandise Mart, and is an all day event with over 20 breakout sessions and two plenary sessions. The cost is $60 if paid by September 15th and $75 thereafter. For more information call (303) 380-2342 or see www.. gayandgrayinthewest.org.

Support Colorado Springs PFLAG—Become a Member

You can join at any time of the year. The current membership year extends from October 1, 2005 to September 30, 2006.

Name(s) of Member(s): _____ **___New member ___Renewing member**

_____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Work Phone:** _____

e-mail: _____

___ Regular Membership $ 30
___ Supporting Member—Silver 40
___ Supporting Member—Gold 60
___ Supporting Member—Platinum 90

Amount Enclosed $_____

This year our chapter must contribute $15.00 for each paid membership to the PFLAG national office to support it in its mission.

Make checks payable to Colorado Springs PFLAG and mail to P.O. Box 10076, Colorado Springs, CO 80932. Membership fees and contributions are tax deductible. All information will remain confidential. PFLAG is a 501(C) 3 nonprofit organization.